

VZCZCXRO2957
OO RUEHGH
DE RUEHUL #0762/01 1330735
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 130735Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4317
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 8536
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DDI/OEA//
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DB-Z//
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 9708
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5852
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5944
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0679
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 4368
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 3347
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 6544
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0956
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2294
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1368
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1977

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 06 SEOUL 000762

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [ECON](#) [KPAO](#) [KS](#) [US](#)
SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; May 13, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

Chosun Ilbo

Seoul National University Ranked First in Korea in Four Academic Categories in an Asian University Assessment Conducted by Chosun Ilbo and QS; Tokyo University Tops the List of Asian Universities in All Academic Categories

JoongAng Ilbo

A Year and Four Months after Lee Myung-bak Administration Granted Greater Autonomy to Universities, University Presidents Still Dissatisfied

Dong-a Ilbo, Hankook Ilbo, Segye Ilbo, All TVs

Prosecution: "Former Taekwang Industrial CEO Wired \$400,000 to Former President Roh's Daughter at the President's Request. The Funds are Separate from the \$1 Million the Former President's Wife Admitted Receiving from Taekwang CEO"

Hankyoreh Shinmun

Judges to Gather as Early as Today to Denounce Supreme Court Ethics Committee's Lenient Decision on Justice Shin's Involvement in a Trial Interference Scandal

Seoul Shinmun

Gyeongsangnam-do Province Governor to be Summoned This Week for Taking Huge Amount of Money from Former Taekwang Industrial CEO

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

According to a ROKG source, the USG is sounding out the ROKG about deploying ROK troops, including a unit of military engineers, to Afghanistan. The Afghan aid issue is likely to emerge as an issue ahead of next month's ROK-U.S. summit. (Hankook, Segye, Seoul, VoiceofPeople)

According to the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC), the U.S. Department of Defense recently reaffirmed that the transfer of wartime operational control from the U.S. to the ROK will take place in 2012 as planned. (Chosun, Dong-a, Hankyoreh, Segye, Seoul,

VoiceofPeople)

Chosun Ilbo featured an article comparing U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth with former Chief U.S. Delegate to the Six-Party Talks Christopher Hill. The article said that the two officials have nothing in common, except that they like sundubu jjigae (soft tofu stew)."

MEDIA ANALYSIS

-Bosworth's Visit to the Region

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun carried an inside-page report evaluating U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth's latest visit to Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo. The report stated that Ambassador Bosworth has won agreement from Seoul and Tokyo over "direct talks between the U.S. and North Korea," broadening Washington's "room for maneuver" (in dealing with North Korea).

The report also speculated that the U.S. and North Korea might reach a "big deal" if the two countries enter into negotiations, a deal similar to the October 12, 2000 U.S.-North Korea Joint Communiqué under the Clinton Administration. The report went on to say that the U.S. might need "some time" to achieve this end.

SEOUL 00000762 002 OF 006

Conservative Chosun Ilbo featured an article comparing Ambassador Bosworth with former Chief U.S. Delegate to the Six-Party Talks Christopher Hill. According to the article, Ambassador Bosworth gives priority to listening to what other countries' nuclear envoys say over setting forth his own opinions, while Ambassador Hill liked to present his own ideas and aggressively tried to sell them to envoys from other countries. Chosun headlined its article: "Bosworth, Hill Have Nothing in Common, Except That They Like 'Sundubu Jjigae (soft tofu stew)'"

-Afghanistan

- ROK Troop Deployment

Citing an ROKG source, moderate Hankook Ilbo reported that the USG is sounding out the ROKG about deploying ROK troops, including a unit of military engineers, to Afghanistan. The ROK media viewed this Afghan aid issue as likely to emerge as an issue ahead of next month's ROK-U.S. summit.

- Change in US Military Leadership

Newspapers carried the following headlines: "Replacement of U.S. Military Leadership in Afghanistan Signals a Change in U.S. Afghan Strategy" (left-leaning Hankyoreh); and "U.S. Afghan Strategy Likely to Turn into Obama Style Putting Emphasis on Hearts and Minds of Afghan People over Combat" (moderate Hankook Ilbo)

FEATURES

"BOSWORTH, HILL HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON, EXCEPT THAT THEY LIKE SUNDUBU JJIGAE"
(Chosun Ilbo, May 13, 2009, Page 8)

By Reporter Lim Min-hyuk

The only thing U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth and Washington's former North Korea point man Christopher Hill have in common "is that they like sundubu jjigae (spicy, soft tofu stew)," a diplomat said half in jest after Bosworth visited South Korea on May 8-11.

The different styles of the two negotiators on North Korean nuclear policy are evident. A South Korean government official was quoted

as saying, "In addition to the fact that Hill served in a permanent post at the State Department while Bosworth is in a part-time position (Bosworth concurrently works as dean of the Fletcher School at Tufts University), they differ quite noticeably from each other in every respect. ".

According to officials, Bosworth gives priority to listening to what other countries' nuclear envoys say over setting forth his own opinions. During his latest visit to South Korea, he did not present any particular ideas. By contrast, Hill liked to present his own ideas and aggressively tried to sell them to envoys from other countries. The idea of North Korea's showy blow-up of the cooling tower at the Yongbyon nuclear facility last year was conceived by Hill. He suggested various ideas even when the Six-Party Talks were in a deadlock due to differences over the North's alleged uranium enrichment program. Another South Korean government official commented, "Hill's ideas sometimes helped find a breakthrough in a creative way, but many of them turned out to be somewhat reckless and irrational."

The two men are also different in their dealings with journalists. Bosworth mostly shuns the press. Although crowds of journalists were waiting at Incheon International Airport last Friday, he left after saying he would not respond to each and every statement or activity by North Korea.

Bosworth spent a mere eight minutes in a press interview at the Foreign Ministry building that evening and gave no answers to reporters' questions when he visited former president Kim Dae-jung

SEOUL 00000762 003 OF 006

last Saturday. By contrast, Hill enjoyed talking with journalists so much that he talked at least 30 minutes whenever a microphone was put in front of him. He went so far as to try to induce reporters to keep hurling questions at him by asking them, "Don't you have any more questions?" This happened despite his staff's attempt to end the press conferences. Hill was sometimes criticized as being addicted to the limelight.

Bosworth talks cool-headedly, even bluntly, and in a matter-of-fact way that leaves little room for diplomatic rhetoric. But the impatient Hill cracked many jokes and favored metaphorical expressions and grand gestures. A South Korean official said, "When we had dinner together, I found Bosworth a scholar but Hill a negotiator." Hill, a big baseball fan, liked to compare each phase of the Six-Party Talks to a baseball game. A diplomat said, "During his latest visit here, when Bosworth was asked how to prevent the North from conducting another nuclear test, he said, 'There aren't many things we can do.' Hill would never have said that."

(We have compared the English version on the website with the Korean version and changed the headline to make them identical.)

USG SOUNDS OUT ROKG ABOUT TROOP DEPLOYMENT
(Hankook Ilbo, May 13, 2009, Page 6)

ROK's additional aid to Afghanistan is emerging as an issue ahead of U.S.-ROK bilateral talks scheduled for next month.

Reportedly, the USG is sounding out the ROKG about troop deployment of various kinds, including a unit of military engineers, to Afghanistan. The ROKG said it has not considered this, denying that it received any official request (from the U.S.). However, observers say that ahead of next month's ROK-U.S. summit, it is very likely that (the ROK's) additional aid to Afghanistan will emerge as an issue.

An ROKG source said on May 12 that at working levels, the U.S. raised the issue of whether the ROK could dispatch a unit of military engineers to Afghanistan. The source added that (the U.S.) is also discussing various ways to support Afghanistan.

When asked whether this means the U.S. made an official request for the ROK's troop deployment, the ROKG source denied it, saying that consultations are underway only at working levels. The source noted

that there could be other options such as dispatching the medical unit, security unit, and police in addition to the unit of military engineers. The U.S. notes that the ROK's Zaytun Unit in Iraq played a remarkable role in rebuilding efforts within the country even though it did not directly engage in combat. The U.S., in apparent consideration of the negative response from among ROK media outlets (about a possible request for a ROK troop deployment to Afghanistan), has not officially requested the ROK to deploy troops.

In this regard, an ROKG official said that the U.S. has put great energy into rebuilding Afghanistan since the inauguration of the Obama Administration. The official added that apart from sending troops, the ROK is compelled, from the perspective of bettering the ROK-U.S. alliance, to consider the various ways it can provide aid to Afghanistan. However, the ROKG is reportedly not considering deploying a combat unit even if it goes ahead with a military contribution.

Therefore, ahead of ROK President Lee Myung-bak's visit to the U.S. and the U.S.-ROK summit, the ROKG is expected to address its additional aid to Afghanistan. ROK-U.S. defense ministries will hold the Security Policy Initiative (SPI) meeting in Washington on May 14 and 15. Also, both countries will hold a defense ministerial meeting in Singapore on May 30. It would be noteworthy to see whether or not they will try to coordinate something prior to the bilateral summit.

On May 6, the ROKG finalized its first plan on aid (for Afghanistan)

SEOUL 00000762 004 OF 006

which calls for providing equipment worth 5 million dollars, such as ambulances, and increasing the number of Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) personnel to 85.

U.S.-NORTH KOREA DIRECT TALKS WIN AGREEMENT FROM SEOUL AND TOKYO
(Hankyoreh Shinmun, May 13, 2009, Page 4)

The U.S. has more maneuvering room.
The U.S. may reach a "big deal" after taking some time.
China's increased role draws attention.

Ambassador Bosworth, the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy, wrapped up his visit to the Korea, China and Japan in Tokyo on May 12.

During his meeting with ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan on May 8, Ambassador Bosworth said, (referring to North Korea), that "many things have happened but apparently little has changed." Since the adoption of the UN Presidential Statement condemning North Korea's rocket launch on April 5, the Obama Administration has been extending a "welcoming hand for dialogue" but North Korea continues to shake its fist. The U.S. has reaffirmed that it would like to restart the Six-Party Talks but North Korea considers this multilateral framework a "broken bowl." It seems that a wide gap remains between both sides. Still, Ambassador Bosworth's tour is seen to have narrowed this gap in some aspects.

For one, his tour was a process of winning agreements from the ROK and Japan over direct talks between the U.S. and North Korea. On May 24, during a telephone conversation with Japanese Prime Minister Aso Daro, U.S. President Obama received agreement from Japan for direct U.S.-North Korea talks in return for urging North Korea back into the Six-Party Talks. Also, during an interview with the Financial Times on May 7, the ROK's Chief Delegate to the Six-Party Talks Wi Sung-lac expressed support for U.S.-North Korea bilateral talks. Wi said that U.S.-North Korea and China-North Korea talks are likely to take place and these bilateral talks could be beneficial if they lead to resumption of the Six-Party Talks. Apparently, this broadened Washington's room to maneuver.

, China's role (is also noteworthy). U.S. President Obama sent Ambassador Bosworth to China and also had a telephone conversation with Chinese President Hu Jintao on May 6. During this conversation, President Obama expressed concerns about North Korea's

recent moves. This might be interpreted as an indication that the U.S. wants China to take action. In response to the UN Presidential Statement on April 14, North Korea boycotted the Six-Party Talks through its foreign ministry statement. Therefore, the U.S. should take a new approach of dialogue instead of reviving the Six-Party Talks. A senior U.S. government official who visited the ROK last month is quoted as saying that the U.S. should discuss North Korean issues including the nuclear issue through new multilateral consultation rather than pursuing bilateral talks with North Korea. This is seen as a tripartite structure involving North Korea, the U.S. and China. Therefore, it is important what consultations Ambassador Bosworth had with China, even though details have not been revealed.

As important as the format of dialogue is, "what will be discussed and what issues should be resolved" between North Korea and the U.S., as The Choson Shinbo, a North Korean mouthpiece published in Japan, pointed out on May 11, is also important. The newspaper asked, "What (type of) dialogue does (the U.S.) want when it considers the (recent) rocket launch a provocation and has responded to it in a hostile manner?" The North Korean Foreign Ministry Spokesman's statement on May 8 that "nothing can come out of our sitting down with a counterpart that is continuously hostile toward us" should also be interpreted ironically. A key ROKG official said, "We are not aware of specific moves regarding (North Korea's) nuclear test." As The Choson Sinbo put it, Pyongyang is demanding that a "new diplomatic scene should be created." This means that the U.S. should give an answer, but as the ROKG official points out, the problem is that "(North Korea) paints too large a picture."

SEOUL 00000762 005 OF 006

In that sense, if the U.S. and North Korea enter into negotiations, they will likely reach a "big deal," which is similar to the October 12, 2000, U.S.-North Korea Joint Communiqué under the Clinton Administration. Meanwhile, Bosworth told reporters after arriving in Tokyo, "A visit to North Korea is something we will be considering over the next few weeks."

BRUCE KLINGNER OF THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION: "TROOP DISPATCH TO AFGHANISTAN REQUIRES CAREFUL APPROACH... IT SHOULD NOT BE LINKED WITH ROK-U.S. SUMMIT"
(Dong-a Ilbo, May 13, 2009, Page 8)

By Reporter Kim Young-sik

Bruce Klingner, Senior Research Fellow at The Heritage Foundation

"If U.S. President Barack Obama asks the ROK to deploy troops to Afghanistan at the ROK-U.S. summit in June and President Lee Myung-bak agrees to it, it will be the worst-case scenario. President Lee will be criticized by the people, and another controversy similar to that over (U.S.) beef imports could occur."

Bruce Klingner, a senior research fellow at The Heritage Foundation, made the statement during a May 12 interview with Dong-a Ilbo, adding, "Troop deployment to Afghanistan requires a careful and thorough approach." The Korean Peninsula expert, who served at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) for 20 years, visited Seoul to discuss U.S. foreign policy under the U.S. Department of State's Speaker Program.

- With the ROK-U.S. summit approaching, controversy over troop dispatch is arising in the ROK.

"The best way is for the U.S. to s-e-c-r-e-t-l-y convey its interest in the ROK's troop deployment to Afghanistan. (The troop dispatch) should not be directly linked to the ROK-U.S. summit. Since he was a presidential candidate, President Obama has urged Asian allies to make more contributions. However, he made clear that it will not be by coercion."

- North Korea is making a series of provocations, including launching a long-range rocket and threatening to conduct a nuclear test.

"Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the U.S. "does not intend to offer North Korea economic aid and additional incentives," which is a very good policy. This is because the U.S. leaves the door open for dialogue at the same time. Although it is important to bring North Korea back to the negotiating table, it is also important to ensure that the North abides by international rules."

- Many people are concerned that North Korea may push for a nuclear test.

"In the past, North Korea gained some rewards by adjusting the pace of its brinkmanship tactics over the course of several months. However, now, while North Korea continues to make provocations, the pace (of its brinkmanship tactics) has become surprisingly fast. At the current stage, North Korea appears interested in acquiring nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capabilities rather than negotiating.

- Why do you think North Korea is not willing to abandon its nuclear weapons programs?

"A series of provocations are creating an increasingly pessimistic and skeptical atmosphere in Washington. North Korea seems to want to go all-in to take the entire pot, instead of gradually raising the stakes as it did in the past. This move could be designed for North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, who is suffering from health problems, to gain something swiftly, or the move could have been made by Kim in consideration of (North Korea's) succession issue.

SEOUL 00000762 006 OF 006

- North Korea is rebuffing U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth.

"Some U.S. advocates of engagement policy say that due to North Korea's rejection, (Washington) should choose a higher-ranking official because Bosworth is serving as a part-time special envoy and is not a high-level official. However, even if Washington chooses a figure agreeable to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, the message being sent by the North will still remain the same. The problem is North Korea."

STANTON